

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-06 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00

DODE-00 DOTE-00 INR-05 NSAE-00 RSC-01 FAA-00 XMB-02

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1890

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

FAA BRUSSELS

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DEPT PASS COMMERCE FOR COHEN AND EXIMBANK FOR YOUNG; CAB

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: EAIR, SY

SUBJECT: CIVAIR: SYRIAN ARAB AIRLINES (SAA) REEQUIPMENT;
POSSIBLE ROUTE TO US

REF: BEIRUT 14670; DAMASCUS 2871

SUMMARY: SYRIAN ARAB AIRLINES (SAA) HAS FINALIZED
SALES CONTRACT WITH THE BOEING COMPANY COVERING FIVE
NEW AIRCRAFT, ALL FOR DELIVERY IN 1976. CARAVELLE
SUPER B'S MAY BE REPLACED WITHIN NEXT SEVERAL YEARS
BY NEW TWINJETS, WITH AIRLINE APPARENTLY WIDE-OPEN ON
POSSIBLE CHOICE. SYRIAN OFFICIALS INDICATE INTEREST
IN DEPLOYING THE TWO NEW 747SP'S ON LONG-RANGE ROUTES
TO US AND FAR EAST. END SUMMARY

1. RCAA AND EMBASSY ECONOMIC OFFICER VISITED KEY SYRIAN
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AVIATION OFFICIALS DECEMBER 16 AND 17, INCLUDING CHIEF

SAA AIRCRAFT SELECTION COMMITTEE AND COMMANDER SYRIAN AIR FORCE GENERAL NEXHI JAMIL; SAA TECHNICAL MANAGER BADAWI; AND SAA PLANNING MANAGER BALI.

2. GENERAL JAMIL INDICATES HE SIGNED DEFINITIVE SALES CONTRACT DECEMBER 12 IN LONDON ON BEHALF SAA WITH THE BOEING COMPANY FOR FIVE AIRCRAFT VALUED AT \$105 MILLION. (WE NOTE BEIRUT 14670 CARRIES BOEING REPORT THAT SALES CONTRACT WAS SIGNED VERY EARLY DECEMBER. WE SURMISE BOEING WAS REFERRING TO ACCEPTANCE OF PROPOSAL BUT NOT DEFINITIVE SALES CONTRACT.) ADDITIONAL SPARES AND TRAINING ITEMS WILL PUT TOTAL CONTRACTURAL VALUE AT \$120 MILLION OR MORE, ACCORDING JAMIL AND BALI.

3. CONTRACT COVERS THREE MEDIUM-RANGE ADVANCED 727-200 TRIJETS POWERED BY UPRATED PRATT # WHITNEY JT8D-17 ENGINES (16,000 LBS. TAKEOFF THRUST EACH), WITH HIGH GROSS TAKEOFF WEIGHT 191,000 LBS. TO PERMIT UNCOMPROMISED PAYLOAD-RANGE CAPABILITIES OVER CRITICAL SECTORS; AND TWO WIDEBODIED VERY LONG-RANGE 747SP'S (SPECIAL PERFORMANCE) POWERED BY PRATT# WHITNEY JT9D-7A ENGINES (46,950 LBS TAKEOFF THRUST EACH), WITH GROSS TAKEOFF WEIGHT 610,000 LBS. DELIVERIES ARE AS FOLLOWS: ADVANCED 727-200'S MARCH, APRIL, JUNE 1976; 747SP'S MAY, JULY 1976.

4. SAA'S PRESENT OPERATIONAL FOUR AEROSPATIALE CARAVELL SUPER B'S WILL BE AUGMENTED BY BUT NOT REPLACED BY THE ADVANCED 727-200'S AND WILL PROBABLY BE KEPT IN SERVICE FOR ANOTHER SEVERAL YEARS, BEING RE-DEPLOYED TO COVER DOMESTIC AND LOWER-DENSITY REGIONAL ROUTES. HOWEVER, PLANNING MANAGER BALI INDICATES THAT THE CARAVELLE FLEET IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY PENALIZED BY HIGHER MAINTENANCE COSTS AND, THEREFORE, THE AIRLINE WILL BE TAKING A CLOSE LOOK OVER THE NEXT YEAR AT POSSIBILITY REPLACING THESE AIRCRAFT WITH THREE OR FOUR NEW TWINJETS IN THE CATEGORY OF THE BOEING 737, MCDONNELL DOUGLAS DC-9, HAWKER SIDDELEY HS-146 (IF BUILT), VFW-FOKKER VFW-614, OR FOKKER-VFW F-28.

5. SAA WET-LEASE FOR TWO BRITISH AIRTOURS BOEING 707-436'S, INCLUDING FLIGHT CREWS AND CABIN STAFF, TERMINATES MARCH31, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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1975 BUT CAN BE EXTENDED IF NECESSARY. HOWEVER, SAA APPEARS HOPEFUL THAT IT CAN ARRANGE DRYLEASE TWO OR THREE BOEING 727-200'S COMMENCING APRIL 1, 1975, TO REPLACE 707-436'S AND COVER TRUNK-LINE CAPACITY REQUIREMENTS UNTIL AIRLINE'S OWN NEW BOEINGS ARE DELIVERED IN EARLY 1976.

6. GENERAL JAMIL AND PLANNING MANAGER BALI BOTH INDICATE SAA IS SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING INAUGURATING LONG-RANGE ROUTES TO

THE US, PROBABLY COMMENCING 1977. GENERAL JAMIL INDICATED THAT THIS WOULD PROBABLY ENCOMPASS INTERMEDIATE STOPS AT KEY EUROPEAN GATEWAYS (PARTICULARLY PARIS). THE AIRLINE, HAVING RECEIVED THE GIFT OF FIVE NEW AIRPLANES, IS NOW EMBARKING ON A DETAILED FLEET PLAN ASSISTED BY BOEING PERSONNEL AND THE BOEING SIMULATOR IN SEATTLE. BALI INDICATED THAT, IN ADDITION TO ROUTES TO THE US, SAA WOULD POSSIBLY DEPLOY ITS 747SP'S ON ROUTES TO FAR EAST, INCLUDING PEKING AND YOKYO.
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